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What Provosts Think Librarians Should Know

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J. Bradley Creed, Provost and Executive Vice President, Samford University

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The following transcription is of a live presentation given at the 2012 Charleston Conference on Friday, November 9, 2012. Video and slides for the session are available on the Charleston Conference website at http://katina.info/conference/video_2012_provosts.php.

James O'Donnell: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us this morning bright and early. We put this panel together because we know that Provosts can be mysterious creatures in the eyes of librarians. You may see us only occasionally and only when you go to that big admin building you call "The Zoo," and you come to see us pacing nervously up and down in our cages. You probably take away from that experience and from what you've heard a variety of images of what Provosts are and what they can be like. Not all of those are entirely true to life. One of the more familiar images of Provosts (slide shows an image of Shrek) is somewhat grouchy, somewhat impatient of a listener, coming around to ask impertinent questions, and as like as not to cut your budget. It could be hard to love a Provost who really looked like this.

But there are other images of Provosts, as well, with which we live, and I'm not sure but that this is somewhat more irritating: (slide shows image of Donkey) a little bit mouthy, a little impertinent, never quite shuts up; and just when you thought it was time to get back to work and to doing your job, he's got another bright idea that he wants you to pay attention to, and he would be only too happy to explain at immense length why it's the most important thing that you could possibly be doing right now.

Obviously, those of us on the platform are reluctant to sign up for either of the images I have now shown you, and our purpose in being here is to show you that there is another model to which all Provosts aspire, and which they can achieve with your assistance: (slide shows picture of an angel) all seeing, all knowing, kind, powerful, interested only in your well-being. An angel, and

indeed, if you treat us right, we can be a guardian angel, looking after you as you go through the world.

How to enable us to be the angelic Provosts you want us to be is the implicit theme of this event. We want it to be dialogic; we want it to be a conversation. What I've asked my colleagues here to do is to make a short presentation, and I will make one myself, to put in play issues that speak to the question with which we started: what Provosts think librarians should know. We'll try to do that in about half the time that we are allotted and then throw the floor open to discussion, both of the things which we say in our presentation, but then also more broadly, for hearing concerns you might have, for letting you ask questions that you might be a little too bashful to ask back home when you're visiting The Zoo, but which you think you might be able to ask in the somewhat more friendly, shall we call this, "Nature Park," environment of Charleston that Katina has so marvelously created for us here.

I put together, when we were starting this conversation, a short list of issues that I'm not going to go through in detail, because I'm going to have some slightly more strategic things I hope to say myself in a little while. These are really meant to be first-order cuts of the things that, when you look at the world around us now, you see being discussed in the space where libraries and Provosts can come together.

Of course we're concerned about the size of the budget; of course we're not ever quite sure what you spend it all on; the whole cost-savings from digitization, we're not real sure those have materialized yet, and we'd be glad to hear why; and we know that typically you occupy a lot of space in the center of campus, and I'll come back to talk about that later. We need to think about how well you are aligned with the mission of the institution, and I don't need to say to you that

that's an evolving kind of topic, and we need to be thinking about innovation. If anything is happening to Provosts right now, it is that Presidents and Boards of Directors are on our case day in and day out to be contemporary, to be "with it," to be innovating, to be creative, to be imaginative; we need all the help we can get in that regard.

To be angelic this morning, there were to be four of us. I'm sorry to say that Karen Hanson from Minnesota has had the kind of crisis which came up yesterday that, when I heard about it, even I didn't say, "Do you think you could postpone that until next week?" I recognized that she had to miss this time with us.

My name is Jim O'Donnell. I have been Provost at Georgetown from 2002 to 2012. I just stepped down a few weeks ago. I'm actually on Sabbatical this year, and when people ask me what I'm doing, I say I'm teaching myself to read all over again—something I haven't had that much time to do. My own background is as a Classicist, and for 6 years before I came to Georgetown, I was Chief Information Officer at the University of Pennsylvania.

Brad Creed is an American Religious Historian and after many years at Baylor University has been Provost at Samford University, which is the largest private university in Alabama, since 2002. He's the senior serving officer present, so I will give him pride of place at the podium next.

Jose-Marie Griffiths has been Provost at Bryant University in Smithfield, Rhode Island, for the last 2 years. Before that, she was Dean of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and when I first met her a few years ago, she too was a Chief Information Officer at that time at the University of Michigan.

We tried to put this panel together to bring a diversity of experiences into place, and also diversity of institutional settings, in some way trying to image the diversity of institutional settings that you all represent when you come here to the Charleston Conference.

So, again, thank you for your attendance this morning. Thank you for your questions, provocations, and discussions that will follow, and especially thanks to my colleagues for making the effort to be here. I think we will all find it a rewarding time. Brad, I think the floor is yours.

J. Bradley Creed: Thank you, Jim. Good morning, I appreciate the invitation to be here. I know that librarians often suffer from stereotypes. Provosts suffer from anonymity. Nobody knows what a Provost does. I'm teaching a class this semester, we're almost to Thanksgiving, we're in the middle of reading Locke's Second Treatise on Government, and one of the students finally raised his hand and said, "What is a Provost, and what does a Provost do?" I don't know if it had to do with the separation of powers in Locke that prompted him to ask that, I'm just glad he didn't ask that question when we were reading Hobbes.

I get this question fairly often, as you might imagine. I have several stock answers, one is that I do some of what a President does, but especially what the President does *not* want to do. That's one way to define my job. I also say the Provost has the second hardest job on the university campus. The question that follows is, what is the first? The President? No, it's the football coach. But I eventually get around to saying the Provost is responsible for students getting a quality education and to ensuring that the faculty have the resources and the support to do their job. That's what I spend my time doing just about every day.

I'm going to show you a picture of our campus here, because central to a quality education is the library; and I have a few pictures of the Samford campus that I would like for you to see. Our campus is laid out on a quadrangle that's flanked by buildings all built in Georgian Colonial style of architecture. It's a pattern that's consistent throughout the campus. I have often said that if the Colonials had played football in Williamsburg in the 1770s, their stadium and press box would look just like ours.

Anchoring the quad at the geometric center of campus is the Davis Library. The library is spatially central to campus and also prominent in our

communications and marketing materials. There are a few examples of the Georgian Colonial. There it is, there are our front gates, and that's the Davis Library with the bell tower on top. The bell tower is imprinted on our publications and business cards, and the monthly publication for news and information to all employees is called, you guessed it, *The Belltower*. And in the actual bell tower is the 49-bell Rushton Memorial Carillon, the first completely chromatic five octave carillon in the United States. You thought I was a Provost; I'm really the Vice President for Advancement here.

We have a carillonneur who plays a concert once a week, and the bell chimes the hour and every quarter hour 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. Samford's eyes and ears are directed to the library.

Well, the bell tower reminds us at Samford that the library is central to our mission as a university and that librarians play a very important role in that. They're indispensable in navigating the information maze that is our media culture. I like to say that librarians are our GPS for navigating the information highway. They're also advocates for access and educational facilitators who provide new tools and approaches to utilizing and integrating technology. They are teachers, valued colleagues who are crucial to the success of the learning continuum on our campus.

Now Samford University has a true core curriculum. All students, whether they end up majoring in philosophy or pharmacy, marketing or music, take a common core of six courses. In those courses we have librarians embedded to serve as instructors and facilitators, helping the students with assignments and learning the basic building blocks of information literacy. They teach the students that acquiring information is only the initial step in becoming an educated person. To learn to analyze critically and evaluation information is the next step, so that it's useful for gaining knowledge and making decisions.

Our approach to general education at Samford is something of a hybrid, in that it combines a core curriculum, distributional requirements from a

variety of disciplinary perspectives, and identified competencies that are considered to be marks of a well-educated person. This competency-based approach is called the Transformational Learning Ability (TLA) Project, which I suggested to the faculty when I first came, and they picked up on it which is maybe why I've been able to be there for 10 years. We have four identified competencies with goals, outcomes, and assessment measures. They are written communication, quantitative literacy, oral communication, and information literacy.

The librarians on our campus have played a principal role in developing and implementing all of these TLAs, but particularly information literacy. This has also been focused on specific programs on campus and not just general education. We have sent faculty teams, which include librarians, to participate in the Council of Independent Colleges' workshops on information fluency, and specifically for the disciplines of literature and the classics. This has allowed us to develop models and templates to roll out for other programs so that it's had a synergizing effect. The librarians have been essential leaders in this process, as well as other campus programs, such as pharmacy with drug information, and law with legal research. Librarians play a role in the delivery of the curriculum and teaching. Whenever I lead the campus to undertake a review of programs to launch a new academic initiative, as we're doing currently in the areas of diversity, international education, and graduate education, I include librarians in these efforts.

You all are aware of the enormous challenges that we're facing in higher education. There's a growing mood in the public for accountability, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility. We find ourselves, as educators, working in a time when higher education is viewed as the next healthcare industry to be reformed. We're seeing governmental approaches to higher education moving from assessment to accountability, from encouraging improvement to demanding compliance. The list of standards, requirements, and mandates is only increasing. Students and their families, strapped for cash, are fearful that the cornerstone of the American dream, a college

education, is slipping through their fingers because it is no longer affordable. A magnitude of change in technology, not seen since Western society was propelled into the Gutenberg galaxy, has radically democratized access to information and methods of learning. Online learning and online degrees, MOOCs and Moodle, mobile devices smarter than a fifth grader, and fifth graders with computers smarter than their parents; those are the challenges that we face. All of these have given people greater access to affordable learning resources that were unavailable even a decade ago.

The librarians are central to us, paddling through these rapids of technology and surfing these waves of change. You are in a unique position to exemplify the stewardship of precious resources, not the least of which is time, as we encounter this new era. When the economic downturn in 2008 washed over all of us, the value of our endowment plummeted and hobbled our ability to provide essential services. Like most of you, we took swift and deliberate measures to reduce spending and to adjust the budget shortfalls. Our Dean of the Library, Kim Hearndon, who's here this morning—she's sitting in the front row like she should be since I'm speaking—she really was kind of the poster child for going through this process. She was proactive, patient, and painfully honest with her colleagues, yet at the same time, rational and reassuring. She renegotiated service contracts; she made decisions driven by data on user activity for journals and other sources of information; she contacted donors and collaborated with other Deans, and most importantly the Provost. Through her leadership, this crisis turned into an opportunity to explore a new paradigm about the use of information resources and to put the library in a position to be more nimble and responsive to future challenges. She also set an example for other Deans and budget heads, and her stewardship efforts did not go unnoticed. When the sum measure of financial equilibrium returned, it was the President who initiated restoring a significant portion of her budget that had been taken away during the downturn, because he recognized her leadership.

These unprecedented challenges that we are facing are opportunities for you librarians to think about your work and the changes that need to take place. You can think about how we're shifting from information access to you having a greater role in information analysis. From the library being a unit historically understood as an academic support or services division, to becoming a campus leader for collaboration. From an organization that's anchored to a facility, to becoming an enterprise that has influence throughout the campus. From a provider of services for students and faculty, to becoming educators whose focus is learning. Commitment to keeping good faith with our students and other constituents, and to practicing stewardship and managing resources, will place the university and university libraries on the forefront of successfully engaging the trials that we are now facing in higher education. I think that you can show us the way to go.

Well, if you are positioned to be at the forefront of these challenges, I want you to remember that you're also on the front line of discovery when it comes to students encountering new worlds of wonder, imagination, and knowledge. Try to picture yourselves, unlike the way we've been pictured this morning thanks to Jim, picture yourselves as impresarios of inquiry.

I want to share out of my own educational experience briefly, because librarians were some of my first and best teachers who provided a continuity to a lifetime of learning. I am grateful for this speaking assignment, because it gives me an opportunity to pay a moment's tribute. I think of four women in particular who, along with my parents, introduced me to a world of books. Two of them were volunteers in the library of the church I attended growing up. I suppose that my mother did a harmless deal with the devil: She would let me read during the sermon if I promised to sit still during church, and it worked. The other two women worked at the local public library which I visited frequently, particularly during summer vacations when school wasn't in session. One of them actually gave me my own copy of

Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds of Texas* for my 12th birthday, which kindled a life-long love for the natural world. Of course I read the Hardy Boys and Dr. Seuss, but they also turned me onto history and biography through the Random House Landmark series, and Grosset and Dunlap's "We Were There" books, do you remember those? They put in my hand, also, the Newberry and Caldecott Award winners.

While in graduate school, I had great difficulty in locating essential primary resources for completing my dissertation. It was a librarian, not my major professor, who guided me to the source that I needed and assisted me in accessing and analyzing the documents. Do you know what it was, do you remember the rather voluminous Evans and Shaw-Shoemaker Collection of Early American Imprints on micro cards? There were two places in my state that had this, and we had to call the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, to find out that it was in the Fort Worth Public Library, and I had to navigate that machine. I think it's digitized now; I hope so. But it made all the difference in my work in completing the PhD.

When I first arrived at Samford, I was trying to complete a journal article. The editor kept sending it back saying we don't have enough bibliographic information. I took it over to the library, and they turned it around in about an hour. So those are just a few examples of how librarians make a difference and how they have in my life.

So don't forget the difference that you make in people's learning and lives. I hope that you are still able to live out of the sense of vocation that led you into this profession, and that you're able to tap into those initial passions that urged you to become a librarian. In a world where it's easy to become jaded and lose heart, rather than to muster the courage to care or to find the discipline against cynicism, think of the joy of reading and the pleasure that it brings others. Remember the words of Groucho Marx, that great American mind, who said, "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend; inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."

And while there's still light, encourage students to read as I do. Whatever you have to do, if you have to get in their face and compel them, cajole, beg, shame, entice; by all means and measures, encourage them to read. You play a very important role in their lives.

Don't forget your love for books, whether it's in the form of something that's bound in Moroccan leather with four-edge painting, or whether today you're downloading electronic volumes on your Kindle, Nook, or iPad. Remember the words of Barbara Kingsolver, the novelist, who said, "I'm of a fearsome mind to throw my arms around every living librarian who crosses my path on behalf of the souls they never knew they saved." Or entertainer Regis Philbin, who made this assessment: "What can I say? Librarians rule!"

So you play an important role in the lives of students. You're a bridge to a better world, and if that thought doesn't make you shout, which you're not supposed to do in the library, at least it should make you smile.

Jose-Marie Griffiths: Good morning, everyone, pleased to be here. This is my first time at this Conference. I've heard so much about it over the years, and my husband has attended on numerous occasions, but this is my first time.

Peter Farquarson, the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, has said, "Relationships of trust depend on our willingness to look not only to our own interests but also to the interests of others." I'd like to propose that the core of what Provosts think librarians should know is that in the endeavors of higher education, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and we have to find ways to jointly address the challenges of our day relative to higher education, identify, and fulfill new roles, and integrate our activities within and across institutions such that we can leverage the resources and investments we have available. That's going to require, just like the schematic in this slide, finding the connections, the shared goals, the interdependencies we can nurture to develop those synergies.

So I took a slightly different approach in preparing for today. I thought I would give you a sense of some of the issues that Provosts think about, maybe the things that keep us awake at night, so that you're aware of the circumstances within which we operate in the second most difficult job in higher education.

None of you would be surprised to know that right now, probably at the forefront of all of our concerns, are economic trends; and economic trends at the macro and the micro level. I've spent most of my career in major public research universities. I made the deliberate decision to move into a private institution. It's very different; it has its own benefits and challenges, but I do think we are all concerned about funding of the universities and the different kinds of institutions that are evolving and what that means for us in whatever kind of institution we're at.

We're also concerned about the fact that tuition costs have been rising over the years, and we now look at the ability of families to pay, and that really is causing some significant concerns as we can't keep our tuition costs rising at the rate that they're occurring. And I've also seen a trend with faculty, we were talking as we were waiting to come in, that one of the interesting things about higher education is that faculty have been fairly mobile. They move from institution to institution; they bump into each other again at different institutions; they have connections. Again, we were talking about all the connections that we've had over the years; but in recent times, faculty have been less able to relocate because they're vested in real estate, their families are in communities, and it's not so easy for people to move around. So the economy has really caused some significant cause for concern.

Now on the other side of the whole funding coin is, of course, we need to manage our costs; so we need, in academic institutions, to be a little bit more aware of where the resources are expended, and how they are expended, and determine to what extent they're expended in an appropriate way to take the institution forward. So that would be at the forefront of our concerns.

Secondary concerns are technology trends. I think we can all say, and certainly most all of you I'm sure have been at the forefront of this, technology brings with it great capabilities, both of the academic side and on the administrative side, but it also has had unanticipated consequences. We see tremendous new push to improve the teaching and learning in research institutions, and technology can allow us to do things we've never been able to do before; but as was mentioned earlier, students tend to come in waves, and they're up-to-date with new technologies and migrate to new technologies in a way, as successive generations of students come forward, much, much faster than many of us can keep up with. You know that, because many of you have been having to try and keep up with the newest technologies. Also, we're seeing significant changes in the delivery of content and the ability to capture data in multiple forms. New instruments and devices that allow us to capture data, we're all looking or participating or planning MOOCs as well as more conventional distributed education. So all of this is sort of, what are we doing in technology, what are we going to do, what does the cloud mean for us. We've been having discussions about having our own cloud, do we really want to do that? Lots of issues in technology, both deliberate and unintended.

The third area of trends that I think are of concern is competition. Things are really driven by the economic and technology trends, but we're seeing increased competition. There are lots of 2+2 programs, where students go to community college for a couple of years and then transition into a university. That sort of reduces the overall cost to students, but we've also seen that overload the capacity of many of the community colleges. We also have seen the rise of for-profit institutions; some have done better than others.

We're also seeing a lot of changes in the international arena. I note, for example, I follow the higher education in the United Kingdom where I came from, and in the last 2 years they have started to charge domestic students, or in-state students we could say, from the European community tuition and reduced the federal government subsidies for the teaching function.

They have seen for the last 2 years in each year a 10% reduction in the number of applicants to those institutions. So where do they go looking for other students? Overseas. And now it actually, in some instances, is less expensive to go to a major institution in the UK than it is to go to an institution in the United States, so that's going to start having an effect. We also have seen the trend of institutions that have overseas campuses and programs. In many instances, students opt to go there for their education, because it's less expensive than staying at the home institution. So there are lots of interesting things occurring in terms of competition for the higher education institutions in the United States at all levels.

I added this one recently to my themes that keep me awake at night: I've been concerned about generally what's happening in the world. We're seeing ongoing immigration of students into the United States, and for the first time, we have seen a drop in the number of domestic graduate students or the number of students going to graduate school. The number of graduate students is growing, albeit more slowly, but is being filled in with more and more graduate students coming from overseas. A good example, applications to business programs have gone down, and they're supplemented and sustained by international students. But other nations are building their own higher education infrastructures, and many academic institutions in the United States and in Canada are going over and helping them build those infrastructures. Over time, as those infrastructures become more robust in and of themselves, that's going to be more of a competitive environment for us. So we have to think about that future. And similarly, with remote campuses, we've seen a number of institutions withdrawing from their overseas commitments because of lack of enrollment, availability of qualified faculty, curriculum control issues, and the underlying business models have not been necessarily sustainable over the long term. These are some of the trends that we see and that we're monitoring, and basically, I have a sense that, as a result of all these trends and the pace at which they seem to be driving change, we could begin to see some major structural changes in higher education in

the United States. That's my big question, my big provostial nightmare, in a way.

Small, private institutions are starting to close; they just can't make it financially. Some major-name schools are close to bankruptcy. We have concern over the future of the public research universities that have seen significant reductions in the per-student funding from their states. I'm in a state that has the second-worst record in the country in terms of public funding, and we could lose the one public research university that we have in the state and its research function. It is vital as an entity, as the research universities, public and private, have been drivers of progress and innovation and economic prosperity in this country and need to be maintained. Community colleges have become more major players; they are now moving into the four-year undergraduate degree programs; they are moving into offering masters degree programs. So they are new players, in a way; they're old players with new roles and expanded roles. The for-profit institutions, whatever we think about them, many of them are doing extraordinarily well. They are finding people, legitimately or not legitimately, to sign up for programs. But we're seeing new entities, like the Pearson announcement—a Pearson representative made a major announcement in the UK just earlier this week—moving into playing a significant role in the development of newer forms of education. I don't want to paint a negative picture, but there is change, and we need to understand that change is there, and I think as academic institutions we have to sort of reinforce who we are, where we are, and what our needs are going to be. Certainly we are monitoring these trends on an ongoing basis.

Let's think about the library and library roles. I want you to think about library roles that are evolving, and in some instances may be new for you. Many of you may be doing these to some extent, but I think they are going to become more pervasive. The first is the role of the libraries in supporting the research function and the scholarly communication function. I put the title as "Open Access, Open Data." This is really being driven by the open movements. I think we are seeing

institutional repositories being repositories for a wide variety of products and outputs from the academic enterprise, but I think increasingly we're going to see the need for more data being managed and helped by the libraries. In the open scholarly communications environment, we've seen moves like in the UK with the recent recommendation for a move to Gold Open Access, and the concerns that the major research institutions there have is the ability to fund that. The concern is that if the government provides the funding, that's fine. The bigger concern for me, in the open access arena, is that if we move to a model where funding agencies contribute the cost of open access publishing, what about all the research that is done by our faculties, and in many cases the majority of our faculties, that is unfunded. How are we going to make those scholarly outputs available? As a provost, that's something that I worry about, because certain ones might be taken care of by the funding agencies, but we're going to have to deal with this.

The other issue I'm concerned about is, I talk about often the universe of authors, which are predominately in academic institutions, but the universe of readers are predominately outside of academic institutions. So to the extent that we build a scholarly communications environment that is within the academy, we are allowing those outside of the institutions who have been funding the scholarly communication process through their subscriptions and memberships are not necessarily participants in the academic scholarly environment. So how do we work to try and maintain a level of contribution from those who have participated in and benefitted from scholarly communication activities over the years?

I think there's a role for libraries in digital publishing. Certainly in my institution, we are looking at an open access journal, and we're looking at the library becoming the publisher. We don't have a press; we're not that kind of institution. I see, of course, a role that's been talked about for a long time in the digital humanities, for the libraries to play a role, but I think the library role in support of research is potentially much more significant than working

with faculty members in the humanities arena. I think we need new collaborative structures between the research function of the institution, the library, and the IT organization. The University of Oklahoma is currently looking at developing some models in that direction, where they have this tripod-type collaboration.

Another role for libraries is in the curriculum. I have put librarians onto the curriculum committees at my institution. They weren't part of the curriculum issues so that it was as if library resources became an afterthought to curriculum development, and that is not going to work very well from my perspective. So librarians have been put onto all the curriculum committees so that they are now aware of what's being discussed and can contribute. We, just like the former speaker, went through a complete reorganization of our introductory curriculum, our general education curriculum, and the libraries are playing a significant role there. They were participants in the new curriculum development; they are actively involved in teaching in the first-year programs; they have a key role in the retention of our students; they have been involved in organizing the recommended structure for our electronic portfolios for students; and they are active participants in the communities of practice that our faculty and our support staff are engaged in. So we really have brought the library; and by the way, the library reports to the CIO, who reports in through me, so it's not a direct reporting relationship at my institution.

I think it's very important, then, that we recognize that we are interdependent in our mission and that we do need to be innovative; although, sometimes I think that this push for innovation may sometimes move to innovation for the sake of innovation. I think every now and then we have to pause and say, "Let's consolidate and make sure that what we're doing is being done in the best way we can." But definitely librarians have been at the forefront of helping institutions be more innovative.

My last key point is that, in addition to being innovative, and at the forefront of many, many technological developments, the libraries have also been at the forefront of developing and

participating actively in consortium memberships. The libraries have always been good at working with others; always been good at sharing. I think we need to do more of this, and I think the libraries can teach the rest of the institution how to be collaborative and how to be active members of consortia. I am concerned, as a Provost, that now our institutional boundaries often constrain what we do. And I think about, in the scholarly communication arena for example, where we no longer own the resources, but, in effect, we're leasing the resources; we need to rethink what that means to our boundaries and our ability to work with others. I think that, collectively, we could probably achieve more than we can do individually. So the lack of integration would be a really major disaster if we get out of step in what we're trying to do.

And, in closing, I would like to tell a brief story that illustrates the need for connections between our various endeavors. Once upon a time, there were two men: one had a basketful of fish and the other a fishing rod. They were both hungry, but they decided they could do better for themselves if they were their own way. The man with the basket of fish made a fire, cooked all the fish, and ate them. However, once they were gone, he had no way of getting more and he died next to his empty fishing basket. The man with the fishing pole set out for the sea, but he was so hungry and it was so far away that he collapsed in exhaustion and died before he reached the water. There were, at the same time, two other men: one with a basket of fish and one with a fishing rod. They decided they'd do better if they stayed together. They set out for the sea and, eating one fish a day, they both reached the ocean where both used the fishing pole to begin new successful lives as fisherman, and they lived happily ever after.

If you have a dollar, and I have a dollar, if we go our separate ways, we still each only have a dollar. When I have an idea, and you have an idea, and we choose to combine them and work with them together, the resulting synergy creates amazing possibilities for success and happy-ever-after's. So while I believe that what Provosts want librarians to know is there are multiple places where we need that synergy in our institutions,

especially if we are to address these quite significant issues that we face, the roles that we have to take on, and the interdependence that we have to embrace. Thank you.

James O'Donnell: Thank you, Brad and Jose-Marie. I was taking notes, and there was literally nothing they said that I could not have said myself in some form. I couldn't have done that last PowerPoint myself; I don't have the skills for that—that was pretty spiffy. But I think we are speaking from the same page and speaking to many of the same issues.

I'm going to choose to highlight three topics: one of which is down-to-earth and planetary and two of which are more astrophysical, and indeed, asteroidal. The down-to-earth and planetary may sound a little bit avuncular, and I hope it does not sound patronizing. It speaks to the question of how you keep the Provost from becoming Provost Ogre. The Provost becomes an ogre when his or her day consists entirely of people showing up looking for money, one after another, after another. This is natural, daily life. It's actually a very good thing about universities; one of the really beautiful things about universities is that they generate far more creativity and imagination and possibility than we could ever imagine to fund. Whatever level we are funding our university at, there are six more bright people in the Department of This and the School of That who've one more idea that is overpoweringly strong and valuable, and we should really do something about that, and okay, we can't do everything about all of them. In the long term, we try to do as much as we can.

But where you can help is by recognizing that the Provost, by him or herself, also has constituencies and stakeholders. There are a lot of other people in the Provost's office; to show up and try to negotiate the relationship between the library and the Provost is probably going to be unsuccessful. But thinking about the way the library works into all of the concerns of the Provost, and some of Jose-Marie's observations about the way the library fits in with the core curriculum, and for that matter some of what Brad said in the same vein, speaks to ways in which the library can be

viewed by the Provost as part of the solution rather than the problem.

This means thinking about and knowing about the stakeholders who come and pound on the academic administrators. In one level, that's conventional. There are Deans; you want the Deans to be your friends. There are Student Affairs Officers; you want the Student Affairs Office to be your friend. There's the Athletic Department; I'm not sure that them being your friend is going to be a particularly rational expectation, except of course where you're helping their student athletes succeed. That could be a win-win. But I would particularly emphasize in this moment of 2012 the dynamic that is going on between universities and their boards of governance of one kind or another, whether it is State Boards of Regents or University Boards of Trustees. We live in a moment in which, first of all, fewer of the people who participate in such organizations are plainly and simply wholehearted enthusiasts for, and supporters of, the university whatever it does. No board member has ever said to me in the last 10 years, "I don't fully understand what you guys are doing, but you're doing a great job. Do more of it, and can I give you some money?" If that board member ever existed, he's gone.

Instead, you have an increasing number of board members who suffer from what, in the IT game, we used to call "In Flight Magazine Syndrome." In Flight Magazine Syndrome is a condition that infects a senior officer who's been traveling and who comes back to the institution and says, to the first officer he meets, "Data mining! Are we doing data mining? I've been hearing about data mining! Can we do some more data mining here please?" When you hear that, you should wait until afterwards to roll your eyes, okay?

But Boards are hearing all the things that we're hearing about the economic challenges of the institutions. They are part of the challenge of looking for assessment of outcomes, proof of the efficient use of resources; they are themselves carriers of that, but they're hearing it from their environment. Universities, as a whole, need a very good story to tell back in that setting, and the Provost in particular needs a good story to tell

back. And, "We need a library because it stands at the center of the campus and has a bell tower," is not ever going to be a satisfactory answer again if it ever was for any period of time.

Building coalitions for supporting yourself on campus—very good; connecting yourselves nationally and internationally in ways that make it clear that you really do know what you're doing; helping your Provost know your strengths well; helping your Provost tell your story to other people is good, but having other people tell your story to the Provost is good as well. Remember that you're not just trying to persuade that one person. That person, the Provost whom you go to see in his cage, is representative of a much larger community; and he or she needs to know that there's support from that community for what you're doing. And that's a reason for the kinds of engagement that Brad and Jose-Marie were talking about.

Okay, that's down-to-earth and Provost Ogre. Astrophysical and, indeed, asteroidal, I'm going to use the remainder of my time to talk about two large things that I think are coming our way. One is the question of Big Data, and this is a question where Provost Donkey can be your problem if you're not careful. MOOCs are the topic of the month, the topic of the moment, and there are a variety of ways in which they will affect libraries. It is more than possible that someone will come to some of you very soon and say, "So in 3 weeks we have a MOOC starting with 140,000 students, and they all need access to licensed resources. You can handle that, can't you?" If you ask my advice what to do in that case, I would say tear all your hair out, scream, and run around in increasingly smaller circles until you collapse. The Provost can't be entirely helpful in everything. You need each other; you need your own profession to work through those kinds of issues.

But those are actually superficial issues. Lying behind the move towards MOOCs is going to be, I predict, a recognition that the MOOC is, in the university setting, one of the important sources of what we now speak of as "Big Data." If the great wars in the economy are being fought between Amazon and Facebook and Google for control about all the data about all of us, and if economic

power is going to reside in that organization that knows the most about you, and therefore can be economically interactive with you, within institutions, control of the Big Data will be no less important. How do we know what we're doing? How do we know how well we're doing it? Just yesterday on the various news lines you may have seen the discussion of new e-textbooks that can tell the faculty what the student is doing: which pages are they reading, what are they clicking on, how are they doing on the Q&A, who's blowing off which assignment? That's useful, and if I have 10 students in front of me I'd like to know all that stuff; but if I have 140,000 students in front of me, I can begin to form some important, statistically valid conclusions about what works and what doesn't work if I control that information. And the way you can keep Provost Donkey away from you, with his "In Flight Magazine Syndrome" ideas, is by understanding that and being a collector and analyst of that big data yourself.

The future you do not want to face is the one in which somebody from the Office of Institutional Research or the Business School shows up in the Provost's office and says, "I've got the data; let me tell you about your Library." You want to live in a world in which you show up in the Provost's office and say, "I've got the data; let me tell you about the Library, and the English Department, and the Business School, and how we can make all of those work more efficiently and more effectively." At that point, Provost Donkey sits back and smiles, and maybe the ears get a little bit shorter, and you begin to look like a colleague and supporter in fundamental questions of the institution.

At Georgetown, we just went through our decennial accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and we discovered in that, as institutions are discovering as their time comes up, that attention from those important bodies to the way in which we as institutions know our own story, the story of our successes and failures, at a degree of detail and granularity of data, and a power of analyzing that data that are far beyond what we could have imagined just 10 years before when we did it before, that's a central topic for the institutions. It will be central to the way we allocate resources;

make yourself a player in that space and you will be a player. Let other people be players in that space; let the IT people do it; let them control all the statistics from Blackboard; let them do the analysis of the statistics from Blackboard, and you will be less of a player than you would be otherwise.

The last asteroid is probably obvious in its own way, as well, but is one that is central to our identity as institutions of higher learning; central to the model we've inherited and to the way we transform that model going forward. And that is the future of the print collection. I'm going to tell a purely personal anecdote about this. When I stepped down as Provost, the chief issue that I had to resolve with the President and his officers was where they were going to move me and all my books. And my books take up a lot more space than I take up. I have a problem. Okay, I'm kind of dealing with it, and I could probably quit any time if I worked at it; and I'm sure there's a 12-step group out there somewhere; but for right now, I've got a problem. I say that by way of framing myself. I'm a Classicist. I grew up recognizing all the same books that Brad was talking about, and I want to go find, I've got a couple of Landmark books on my shelves, as a matter of fact, from long ago. But a few months ago, spring of this year, I came to my senses and I said, you know, the Barnes & Noble in my neighborhood closed down a few months ago; lost its lease. It's now become Nike Town—take that for a symbol. I'm not sure when I was last in a book store and bought a book. In April of this year, I could tell that, in fact, since the beginning of the year, I hadn't actually gone into a bookstore to buy a book. So then I got out my credit card receipts from last year, that summary statement that you can now get online from your credit card provider, and I discovered that I, Jim O'Donnell, guy with a problem, had not been in a book store in the United States and purchased a book in all of 2011. Okay, I bought books, no question about it, and no points for guessing who I bought most of those books from; no points at all. But I've got a different environment of physical collection than I ever had before, and, in fact, I am now using this thing (holds up an iPad). I had a Kindle 3 years ago that didn't catch with me; the iPad has caught

with me. I'm spending more time with this than otherwise. I'm on sabbatical; I'm away for 2 months now from my home campus. I actually took six hard cover books with me, and that was about three more than I absolutely needed.

Okay, I say to myself, if I'm there, if the guy with the problem is there, then all of the people with that problem are there, and all of the people who don't have that problem. The ones who haven't gotten that problem yet, they're someplace else. Your collections probably do take up extraordinarily valuable real estate at the center of campus; chances are they need renovating every 30 years or so; chances are your collections are getting big enough that it needs part of it to be housed someplace else. I was Chair of the Board of the Washington Research Library Consortium from '08 to '10; during that time, we built another module for another million and a half volumes in our remote storage facility shared with institutions in the Washington area. My successor is now stepping down in his third year of a term replacing me, and the big issue is, "How soon can we build the next million and a half volume module for that facility?" When we started building the second of three, it seemed like a really good idea that we had room for three; when you get to the point that you're building number three, it doesn't seem like such a good idea that you've got room for three when the future is coming at you as fast as it possibly can.

Meanwhile, the physical use of the stack collections is the question that needs thinking about hard and carefully. At Georgetown, we've continued to see physical circulation numbers go up through the last 10 years. We don't quite believe that can go on forever, but that's good news for the print collection. But there are other forces; the next 10 years will certainly see a time

in which, first of all, the pressure on space and the cost of space will require you to think about what you're doing with your print collections, and at the same time, you will be pressed in other directions.

Here's a fact I learned from an Ithaka study a few years ago: in 2005, the median age of a book in an American research library was 30. That is to say that half the books in research libraries came after 1975. I got my PhD in 1975; I took that as a bullet right in the forehead when I read that. I said, "Good grief, the world has gotten that much bigger, that much faster." Those data are now 7 years old. That problem is getting bigger. Again, go back to your poor Provost who doesn't want to be Provost Ogre. Boards of Directors, Boards of Regents, Boards of Trustees; they know this stuff. They are less sympathetic to, "We want to spend another umpteen million dollars on building more shelves for books," than they've ever been before. Part of your job is to make them be sympathetic for building as many shelves for books as you really need, but part of your job is also to persuade them that you are thinking it out ahead of them on what the future of your print collection is, how it can best be utilized, how it can best be housed, how it can best be managed, and what we can do to make the best use of it for years to come.

Well, I think if you can address the kinds of issues we've been talking about, if you can build your coalitions, if you can master things like Big Data, if you can be a partner in the curriculum the way my colleagues were talking about, and if you can be persuasive in addressing the issues that are being pressed on your Provost in the other direction, then indeed you have a better change of turning your Provost into Provost Angel, and we all have an interest in that. Thank you.